

TO: V. J. St. Pierre, Parish President

FROM: Jamie Coleman, Director of River Parishes Business and Career Solutions Center

SUBJECT: 2010 Annual Report

Our mission in the River Parishes Business and Career Solutions Centers is to effectively serve our citizens and businesses through customer-focused, demand driven workforce development, education, and training programs in a professional, transparent and responsive manner, while maintaining a team based approach in delivering excellent customer service and meeting performance expectations. In efforts, to develop a demand-driven system that ties workforce development to business and industry needs, we will continue to coordinate and collaborate between various local and state agencies, school systems, businesses and industries. In doing so, we have been able to expand beyond our mission and new initiatives so that we are able to respond quickly to new businesses or expansion.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the accomplishments of the River Parishes Business and Career Solutions Center 2010 reporting period. In remaining in alignment with Governor Bobby Jindal's goal in developing a comprehensive workforce which includes five key elements that are listed as:

1. Strengthening and prioritizing community and technical programs to match workforce needs, meet market demand and fill available jobs.
2. Immediately responding to urgent workforce opportunities and challenges.

3. Maximizing the input of business and industry to realign and integrate Louisiana's workforce strategy at the statewide and regional level.
4. Expanding the career options of high school students.
5. Recruiting and training new workers to fill thousands of available jobs.

During 2010, the River Parishes Business and Career Solutions Centers have developed goals and objectives surrounding our integrated service delivery model; specifically in meeting the needs of businesses and jobseekers. Because the state of Louisiana is experiencing a "skills gap", training and/or education of citizens who do not meet the requirements of available jobs, finding qualified employees is a main barrier for business growth for companies in the state. As a result, businesses cannot find the qualified employees they need to grow, and there are fewer opportunities for lateral growth, which has lead to thousands of youth seeking better opportunities in other states. In efforts to combat these issues, we have listed action items such as: Continued Partnership with the Louisiana Technical College, Reserve Campus, Responding to Business Layoffs with Customized Recruiting Events and Collaborations with St. Charles Parish School Board and Tri-Parish GED centers.

The River Parishes Business and Career Solutions Centers have worked aggressively to ensure that center operations of staff in each location (St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. James) are prepared with the guiding principles, service delivery, customer services and resources that are necessary to strategically plan and achieve outcomes based on the aforementioned workforce plan.

As a result, in efforts to continue in assisting with improving our local, state and national economy during the 2010 calendar year, the Business and Career Solutions Centers were able to provide services to jobseekers, businesses and youth by maximizing both human resources and financial resources, thus outlining our accomplishments and achievements for 2010. These essential services include the following:

A. Career Solutions Services

The Business and Career Solutions teams have assisted a total of 3,934 individuals throughout the calendar year by providing services which includes, but are not limited to the following, hosting customized recruiting events for employers, organizing job fairs, and facilitating soft skills and work readiness workshops to employers:

1. Employer Customized Recruiting Events

- Federal Express
- Arcelor Mittal
- Noranda Alumina
- Primerica
- Dial-A-Maid
- Associated Terminals
- IMTT
- BBL Securities
- 84 Lumber
- Dollar General
- Accustaff
- Brand Scaffolding

2. Career Ready Workshops

- Preparing for an Interview
- How to Write a Winning Resume and Cover Letter
- How to Search for a Job in the 21st Century
- How to Dress for Success
- Speech Enhancement Training
- Customer Service Training
- Intro into Basic Computer Skills

- Job Seekers Workshop
- Where and How to Look for Job Leads

Because a high quality education is the foundation for a strong workforce, the River Parishes Business and Career Solutions Centers invested many dollars in training to advance both adult and youth who were interested in seeking opportunities to obtain and/or improve their skill sets. These training opportunities are obtainable via post-secondary education and/or proprietary schools that provide a fundamental education for high demand occupations (i.e. River Parishes Technical College, Nicholls State University, etc) hence providing the community and taxpayers a return on investments.

B. Business Services Team Initiatives

Our Business Services Representative continues to lead the Business Services department of the River Parishes Workforce Investment Act as a liaison between the Louisiana Workforce Commission and the business and industry community within the River Parishes. Our representative is the foundation of business intelligence, and is responsible for conveying this intelligence to the Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and LWC. Because our representative serves in the role of a broker, it has been his responsibility for building and managing employer relationships and connecting them to the Business and Career Solutions Centers. In doing so, our representative has been crucial and necessary in engaging educated and qualified jobseekers with businesses.

C. Youth Services

The River Parishes Business and Career Solutions Centers was able to hold a Summer Youth Program with the remaining funds from the ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009). This program assisted youth 14 – 24 years of age with soft

skills, employment opportunities and an option for businesses to employ youth and assist in maintaining their staffing through federal dollars (ARRA).

Youth program outcomes as follows:

- 36 youth participated in the program
- 18 were classified as “in-school youth”
- 18 were classified as “out-of-school youth”
- 12 entered into post-secondary education
- 8 were able to obtain permanent employment

D. Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

The Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill of 2010 affected the state’s natural resources and livelihoods of thousands of Louisiana’s citizens living along the coast and federal assistance was made available through the National Emergency Grant (NEG) Gulf Oil Spill Project. Our three (3) parishes, St. Charles, St. James and St. John the Baptist, were awarded \$1.3 million dollars to assist the citizens affected by the spill. Our centers will be able to provide the full array of WIA services in order to support long-term training as many of the individuals affected by the oil spill will not be able to return to their previous lines of employment. Services will include WIA intensive, training and support services.

The year 2010 was a very successful year for Business Services, Recruitment and Placement and Membership sectors. Performance Measures as dictated by the Workforce Commission were either “met” or “exceeded”. These Performance Measures are a way of grading our Centers and gauging our accomplishments in the center.

In another aspect of 2010, it was a very trying time. It seems that financial woes would become quite an obstacle. The River Parishes Workforce Investment Board Area 14’s funds were being reduced every funding year. Our carry-over dollars were being expended

and therefore we were no longer able to rely on carry over. The time had come to put a plan together on how to continue to operate on a very limited amount of funds.

Late 2010 brought about a reduction in force and the closures or consolidating of offices. This being done, we are continuing to serve the public seamlessly and with the same effectiveness and quality of workmanship as we did in the beginning of 2010.